

# Building Belonging Through School Branding Campaigns

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# What a brand is – and isn't!

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## **A BRAND IS:**

- **A Perception:** It lives in the minds of your community — how they feel and think about you.
- **An Experience:** Every interaction someone has with your school district shapes your brand.
- **A Promise:** It communicates what people can consistently expect from you.
- **A Personality:** It reflects your values, voice, and visual identity.

# What a brand is – and isn't!

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## A BRAND IS NOT:

- Just a logo or a name
- A marketing campaign
- What *you* say it is — it's what **they** say it is

# Bringing your brand to life...

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## **Consistent Communication**

Reflect the district's values in every message.

# Bringing your brand to life...

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## **Engage with the Community**

Involve families and local partners in events.

# Bringing your brand to life...

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## **Positive Experiences**

Foster a welcoming environment for all.

# Bringing your brand to life...

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## **Celebrate Achievements**

Share student and staff successes.

# Bringing your brand to life...

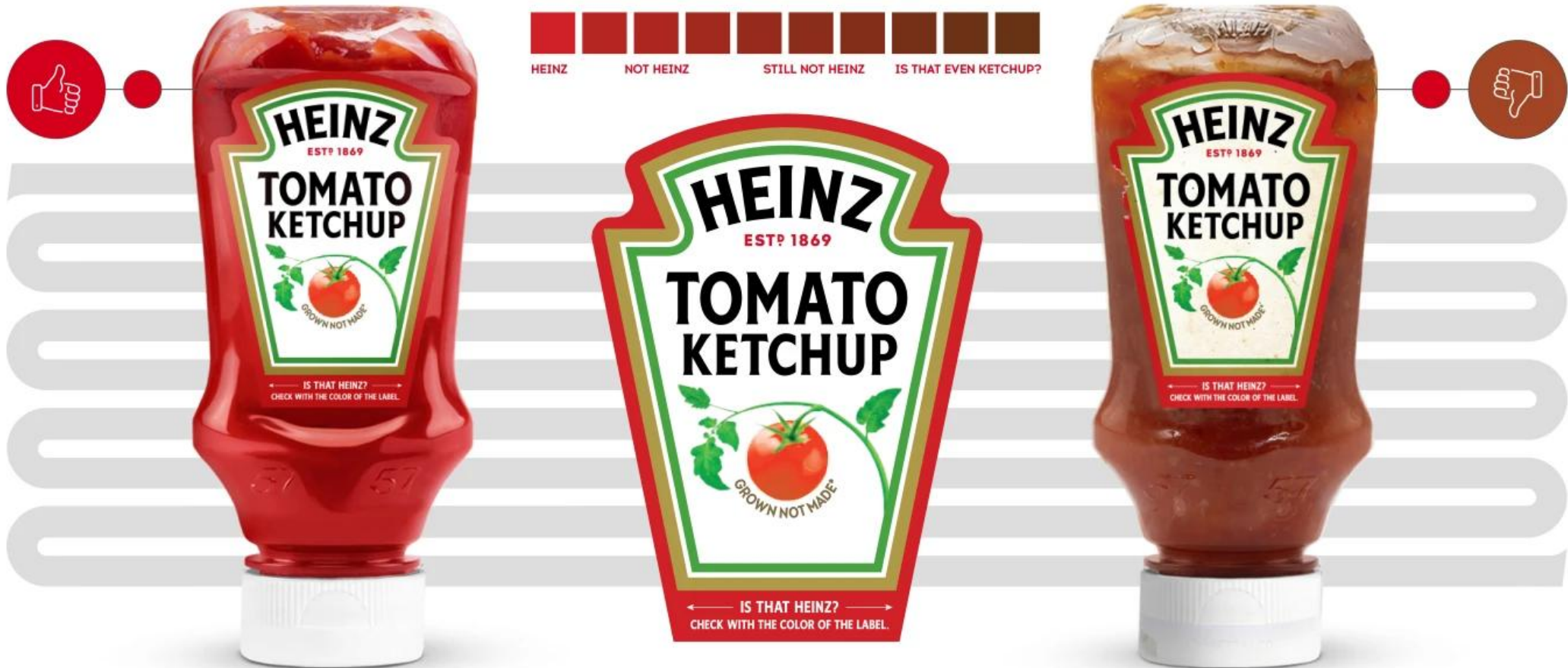
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## **Visual Identity**

Use logos, colors, and fonts consistently.



# IS THAT HEINZ?







**BONDURANT-FARRAR**  
COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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BONDURANT-FARRAR  
**BLUEJAYS**



**What are we doing to increase positive interactions and build a sense of belonging?**



# First impressions matter...

- Website Traffic
- Phone Callers
- Visitors to Main Offices
- Social Media
- Word of Mouth

**Initial experiences  
set the tone.**



# Open lines of communication

- District vs building level
- Website inquiries
- Community events
- Be visible, approachable



## Reach Out Directly With Questions

Bondurant-Farrar's Communication Guide

### Questions about your CHILD:

Please contact your child's teacher, first. Many questions can be resolved quickly and efficiently by contacting your child's educator.



### Questions about your SCHOOL:

Please contact the school's main office for school-related questions.

Our building administrative assistants are a great resource and can connect you with a building administrator, if needed.

### Resources:

Web: [www.bfschools.org](http://www.bfschools.org)  
Phone: 515-967-7819

Submit Questions Electronically:  
[www.bfschools.org/contactus](http://www.bfschools.org/contactus)

Facebook: @BFDistrict  
Twitter: @BF\_District

300 Garfield Street SW  
Bondurant, IA 50035



### Questions about your DISTRICT:

Please contact the district office at 515-967-7819.

General, non-time sensitive questions can also be submitted online.





# A sense of belonging from day #1





# Photo opportunities that build belonging and school pride



Stephanie McCuen is with Travis McCuen.

Aug 21, 2024 · 2

And just like that we are ready for 2nd grade! Little man is nervous this year since he's at a new building but I have every confidence that he will do amazing things!

#GraysonNeal  
#mccuenadoptionstory  
#welcomebackbluejays



Like

Comment

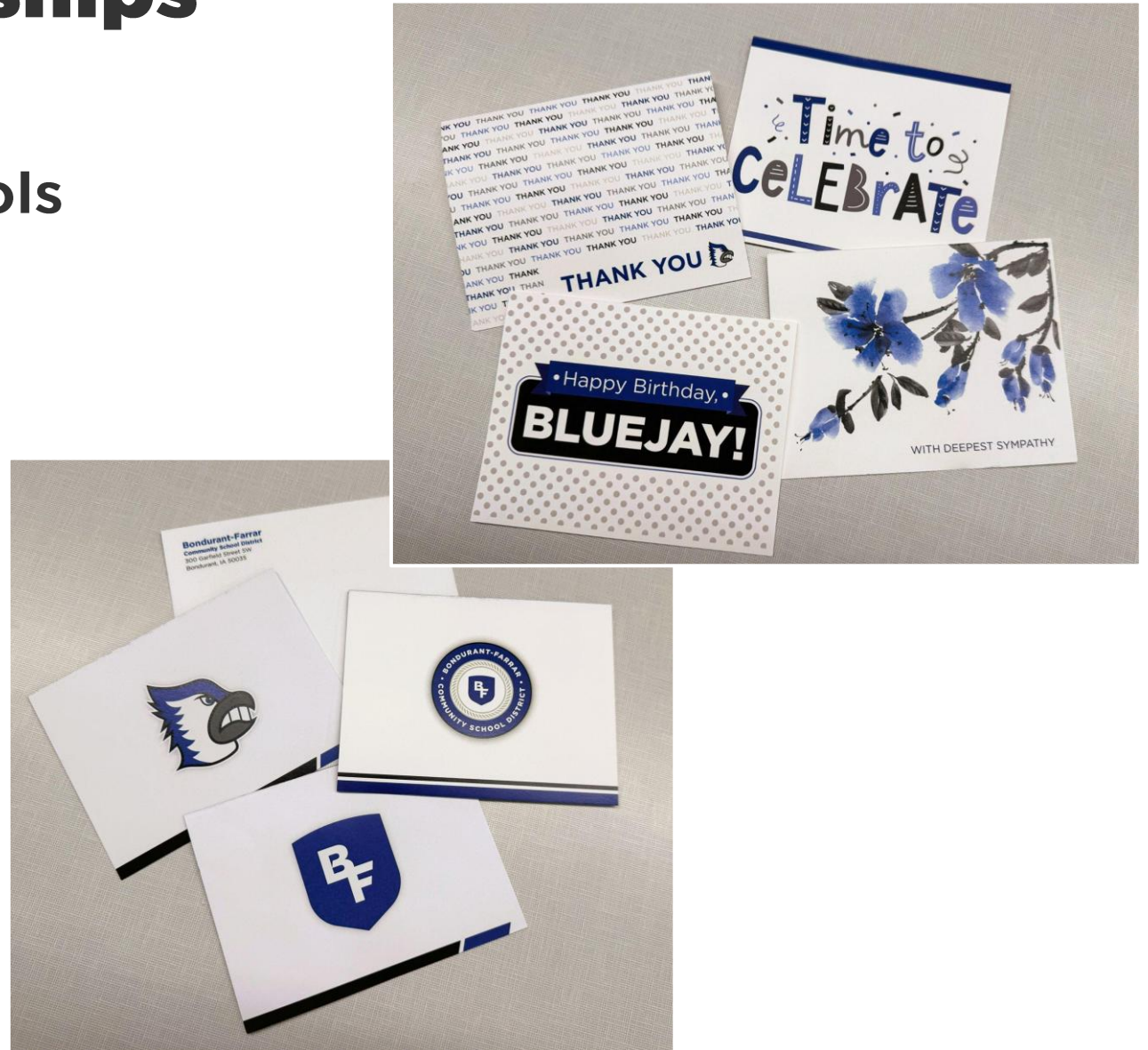
Send

Danielle Bridges Bird + 72



# Maintaining relationships

- Standard across all schools
- Simple way to show individuals they matter
- Parents often share the notes online, spreading positivity



# Voices of our team

- Hearing their perspective means more than anything we can write
- Builds pride and sense of belonging



**Melinda Franz**



*"I have had the privilege to work for this district for over 16 years. I always feel respected and appreciated."*

*I love my Bondurant-Farrar family!"*

Melinda Franz,  
Custodian



**Natalie Wilson**



*"As a parent, I've seen firsthand the positive impact our Bondurant-Farrar staff have had on my own children growing up in this district. As a school counselor, I'm grateful for the opportunity to give back to this community every day."*

Natalie Wilson,  
School Counselor



# Celebrations



**Garrett Von Stein**  
12th Grade Student  
Bondurant-Farrar High School

Garrett has been an essential member of Bluejay Digital, Ag, and various district projects over the past several years. He generously volunteers hundreds of hours each year, takes on leadership roles, and truly exemplifies reliability. Through his dedication, he has played a key role in making Bluejay Digital a state leader, always striving to meet and exceed high expectations. Additionally, Garrett has been instrumental in mentoring younger students, teaching them about equipment, processes, and best practices to help ensure the program's continued success.

Garrett is an outstanding Ag and FFA student who has devoted numerous hours to the school garden, contributing to its success and productivity. His efforts have made a lasting impact, as all of the produce grown is donated to the Food Bank of Iowa, assisting individuals and families in need. Garrett consistently goes above and beyond to support others in the community, showing true dedication to service and selflessness. Congratulations and thank you!



**Simmone Spencer-VanGorp**  
Paraeducator  
Anderson Elementary

Simmone, you are truly one of a kind. Your unconditional acceptance of everyone, no matter their background or circumstances, is such a gift to our school community. Your kindness and thoughtfulness shine through in everything you do—whether it's the way you listen with genuine care or how you always seem to know when someone needs a bit of extra encouragement. You consistently step up to help wherever you're needed, and your willingness to go above and beyond makes a huge impact on both students and staff.

Thank you for being such an amazing part of our team and for spreading kindness and positivity everywhere you go. We are incredibly fortunate to have you!

The Bluejay Way Award  
2024-25: Quarter 2





# Transportation Celebrations

- Shows students they are seen and valued
- Stickers for kind or good behavior
- One rider recognized monthly by each driver



**BONDURANT'S BEST  
RIDER OF THE MONTH**

**JOHN DOE**

FOR BEING KIND, RESPECTFUL, RESPONSIBLE,  
AND STAYING SAFE ON THE SCHOOL BUS.

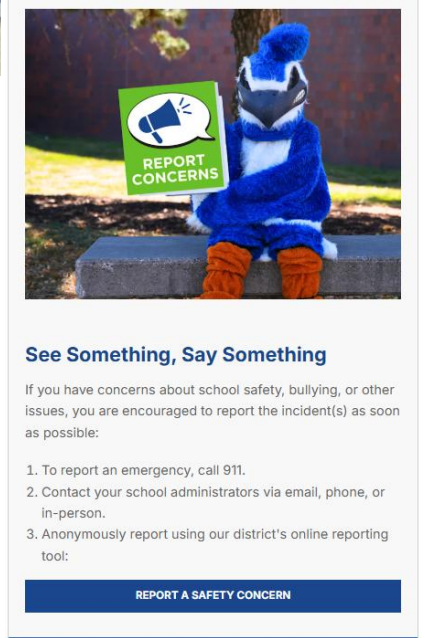
TERE KASAN  
Bus Driver

MARY JO HETWICK  
Director of Transportation



# Utilize your mascot

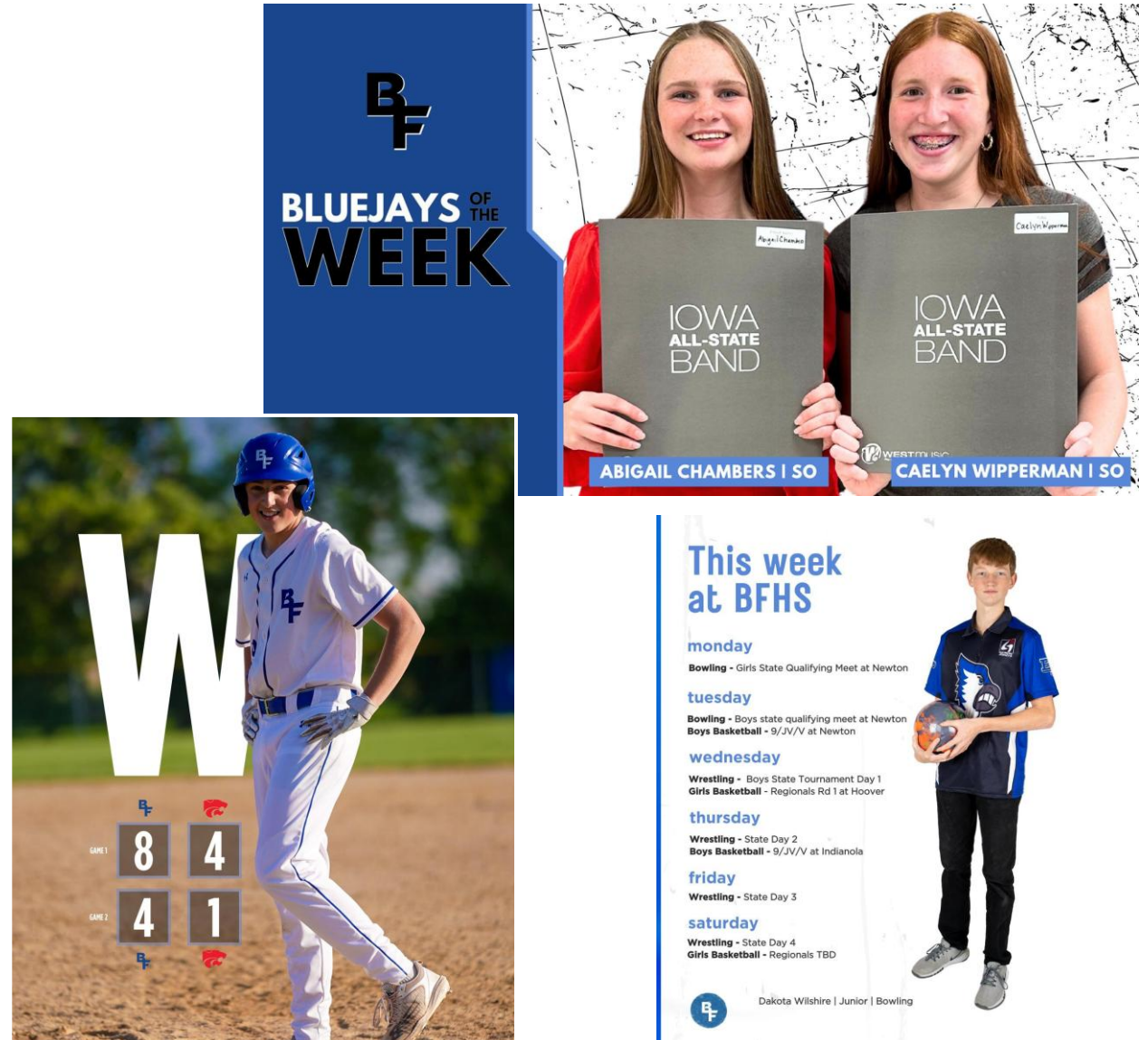
- Fun, familiar face that grabs student attention
- Makes safety feel approachable and part of our culture





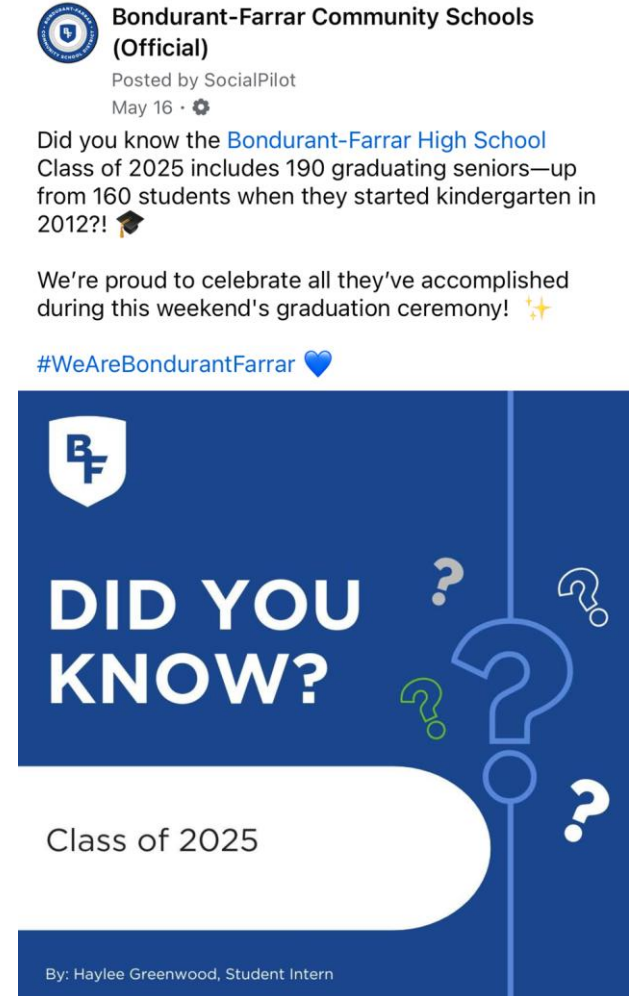
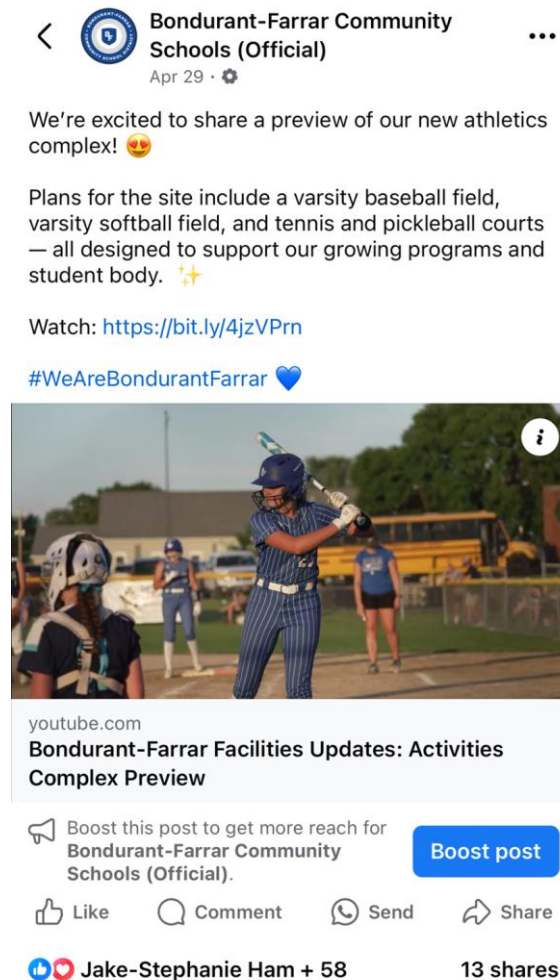
# Students highlighting students

- Branded videos, graphics and livestreams
- Builds school pride and real-world experiences
- Keeps families engaged, near and far



# Student interns supporting district communication

- Year-long internship opportunity for senior students
- Support district communication and board goals
- A unique, real world opportunity





# Community engagement

- Meet families where they are
- Face-to-face communication
- Share school spirit and district updates
- Coffee & Conversations events with local chamber





# Reach all residents

- Keep residents informed and connected year round
- Build trust and awareness over time
- The only time they hear from you shouldn't be for a bond vote





Dubuque  
Community  
Schools



*To inspire and challenge*



**Dubuque**  
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS



**Dubuque**  
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS



**Dubuque**  
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS







**Dubuque** COMMUNITY SCHOOLS



**READY.**  
**FOR YOU.**

# STRATEGIC **PLAN** 2024-2029



**READY.  
FOR YOU.**

**The best strategic plans have  
brand in mind.**

# **The Role of the Board:**

**Vision  
Values  
Pillars**

## OUR MISSION

TO DEVELOP **world-class learners** AND **citizens of character**  
IN A **safe and inclusive** LEARNING COMMUNITY

## OUR VISION

**Unfolding the potential of every student by empowering the educator/  
student relationship through:**

- » promoting the roles and responsibilities we all have in the 21st-century learning process;
- » removing barriers;
- » creating an environment where character and citizenship count;
- » leveraging content knowledge to become critical thinkers and problem solvers; and
- » providing multiple pathways to unlocking student potential.



# OUR VALUES

## The Board of Education believes:

- » **we will** celebrate the value each individual brings to our diverse learning community;
- » **we will** make decisions that are student-centered, data-driven and always anchored in sound process;
- » **we will** operate transparently, ethically and equitably with unwavering certainty;
- » **we will** steward our resources wisely, efficiently and purposefully;
- » **we will** improve continuously, seeking to always do better when we know better;
- » **we will** develop and empower leadership across all levels of the district; and
- » **we will** cultivate strong relationships and shared goals as we seek success for all.

**Engage stakeholders.**

**Get necessary buy-in early.**

**Be authentically you.**

# GOAL **PILLARS**

Fully aligned work in these four established pillars will create the synergy needed to propel us toward our goals.



## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT + DEVELOPMENT

Empower all students with the education and skills necessary to live healthy, rewarding lives as confident, successful individuals.



## FAMILY + COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Broaden and strengthen meaningful, active engagement among students, families and community partners to support and enhance diverse learning opportunities for all students.



## EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE

Retain, recruit and develop a deeply caring, high-performing staff that meets the needs of students effectively, while demonstrating behaviors and attitudes consistent with the belief that all students can learn.



## EFFECTIVE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Maintain fiscal stability, maximize efficiency of district operations and align resources to support dynamic teaching and learning.

# ACTION STEPS

Across all areas, these action steps provide the focus needed to deeply integrate our work across the district to support student success.



## STUDENT ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY

### Instruction + Interventions + Extensions

- » Drive instructional practices, built on data and collaboration, that support individualized student growth toward essential grade-level standards and beyond.
- » Deliver comprehensive attendance and behavior programs that create a safe and vibrant optimal learning environment for all students.



### Individual Passion + Purpose

- » Expand programmatic opportunities guided by greater student voice, agency, and co-creation to provide enriching experiences that bring future possibilities into view.
- » Expand career and college readiness efforts that connect students to our community and provide application of learning in real-world settings.



### Human-Centered Skills + Supports

- » Deliver programs and sustain a culture that reinforce the core human values of respect, empathy, character and honesty as they relate to being productive members of a community.
- » Implement evidence-based strategies and skills to engage students experiencing barriers, adversity and distress to support their individual perseverance toward success.



### Culture Growing

- » Enhance structures that foster a highly supportive and healthy environment for staff, built on shared expectations of consistently exceptional work and belief in all students.



### Family Connections

- » Deeply and frequently engage current and future families in the ongoing progress of their student and modernize family engagement methods to support an environment where families feel valued and respected.



### Powerful Partnerships

- » Serve as the focal-point of community partnerships related to education to further the shared responsibility of the broader community in student success.



### Facility Focus

- » Strategize and plan facility changes that support the student experience while also attaining financial efficiencies that ensure long-term viability.



### Streamline for Sustainability

- » Review and modify program offerings and allocate resources accordingly to support the most essential programming aligned with our strategic priorities.



## A COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT

### Staffing Success

- » Enhance staff recruitment and retention systems that highlight and position the district as an employer of choice, leading to hiring a diverse, best-fit team.



Each action drives us toward **success for each and every student.**

# MEASURES OF SUCCESS

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Percentage of students considered chronically absent, according to the district's spring BEDS report.

» CURRENT: **33.40%** GOAL: **20%**

## ACADEMIC GROWTH

Percentage of students reaching their annual typical growth goal on universal screener assessments.

Kindergarten (Reading)	»	CURRENT: <b>67%</b>	GOAL: <b>77%</b>
Kindergarten (Math)	»	CURRENT: <b>64%</b>	GOAL: <b>74%</b>
Third Grade (Reading)	»	CURRENT: <b>59%</b>	GOAL: <b>71%</b>
Third Grade (Math)	»	CURRENT: <b>52%</b>	GOAL: <b>64%</b>
Fifth Grade (Reading)	»	CURRENT: <b>54%</b>	GOAL: <b>66%</b>
Fifth Grade (Math)	»	CURRENT: <b>53%</b>	GOAL: <b>65%</b>
Eighth Grade (Reading)	»	CURRENT: <b>43%</b>	GOAL: <b>58%</b>
Eighth Grade (Math)	»	CURRENT: <b>46%</b>	GOAL: <b>61%</b>

## ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

Percentage of middle and high school students participating in at least one extracurricular activity.

Middle School (Grades 6-8)	»	CURRENT: <b>60%</b>	GOAL: <b>80%</b>
High School (Grades 9-12)	»	CURRENT: <b>35%</b>	GOAL: <b>55%</b>

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE INTENTIONS

Percentage of students with post-graduation plans according to the state-reported graduate intention data.

» CURRENT: **94.71%** GOAL: **100%**

## GRADUATION RATE

Percentage of students receiving a diploma.

Four-Year Graduation Rate	»	CURRENT (Class of 2023): <b>81.90%</b>	GOAL (Class of 2028): <b>86%</b>
Five-Year Graduation Rate	»	CURRENT (Class of 2022): <b>83.68%</b>	GOAL (Class of 2027): <b>88%</b>



We exist to fuel the faces of the future —  
**the dynamic leaders of tomorrow.**



# **SWWC**

**So What? Who Cares?**



**Dubuque** COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

# STRATEGIC **PLAN** 2024-2029



**READY.  
FOR YOU.**

# Align, Align, Align!

**Live It First.**

**Share It Second.**





Lincoln Elementary School · Follow  
May 22 at 4:54 PM · 🌐

Today our staff celebrated being "Ready for You!" We appreciate the opportunity to serve each of our families at Lincoln Elementary and are ready to meet the learning needs of all of our students! Thanks for being part of Our Pride!

#OurLions #OurPride 🦁

Dubuque Community School District



👍❤️ Cathy Brimeyer, Megan Elsinger and 39 others

4 shares



**Small touchpoints  
and details matter.**

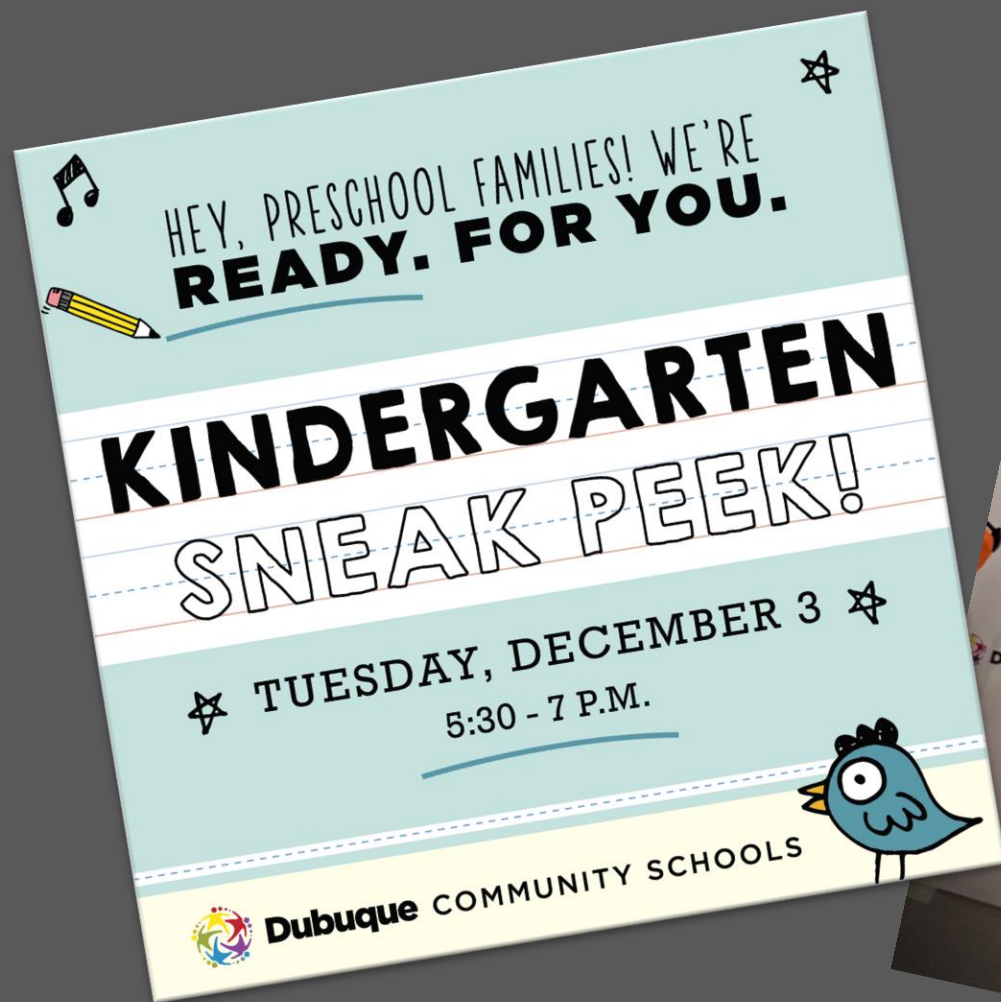


THE YEAR

**KHARI**

© becomes a  
KINDERGARTNER!







# READY. FOR YOU.

Team DCSD,

As we send students off for winter break, I hope that you are ending this half of the school year with a sense of accomplishment and pride in all that you — and we collectively — have accomplished.

While filled with its share of challenges that each school year inevitably brings, there are many things to celebrate this year as 2024 comes to a close. We are passing the baton off to the new year in a positive way.

We launched our new strategic plan ([READY. FOR YOU.](#)) this year and have already started to see momentum building.

Our early data from this first half of the year shows positive gains in reducing chronic absenteeism and in lowering the number of behavior office referrals compared to the same time period last year. These positive signs reflect the deep, focused collaboration in these areas between so many work groups.

We have empowered students to succeed in the classroom, in competition, on stage, and everywhere in between. We have broken down barriers and lifted students up. Their success comes as a result of your support of students and families.

There are undoubtedly challenges ahead as we embark on 2025. Remaining committed to our collective spirit of excellence and continuous improvement will drive us to positively impact the community we serve. I am thankful for you and the work you do each day in support of these efforts.

This winter break, I hope you find moments of happiness all around you and that you take time for yourself to refresh and recharge so we are **ready** for our students in 2025.

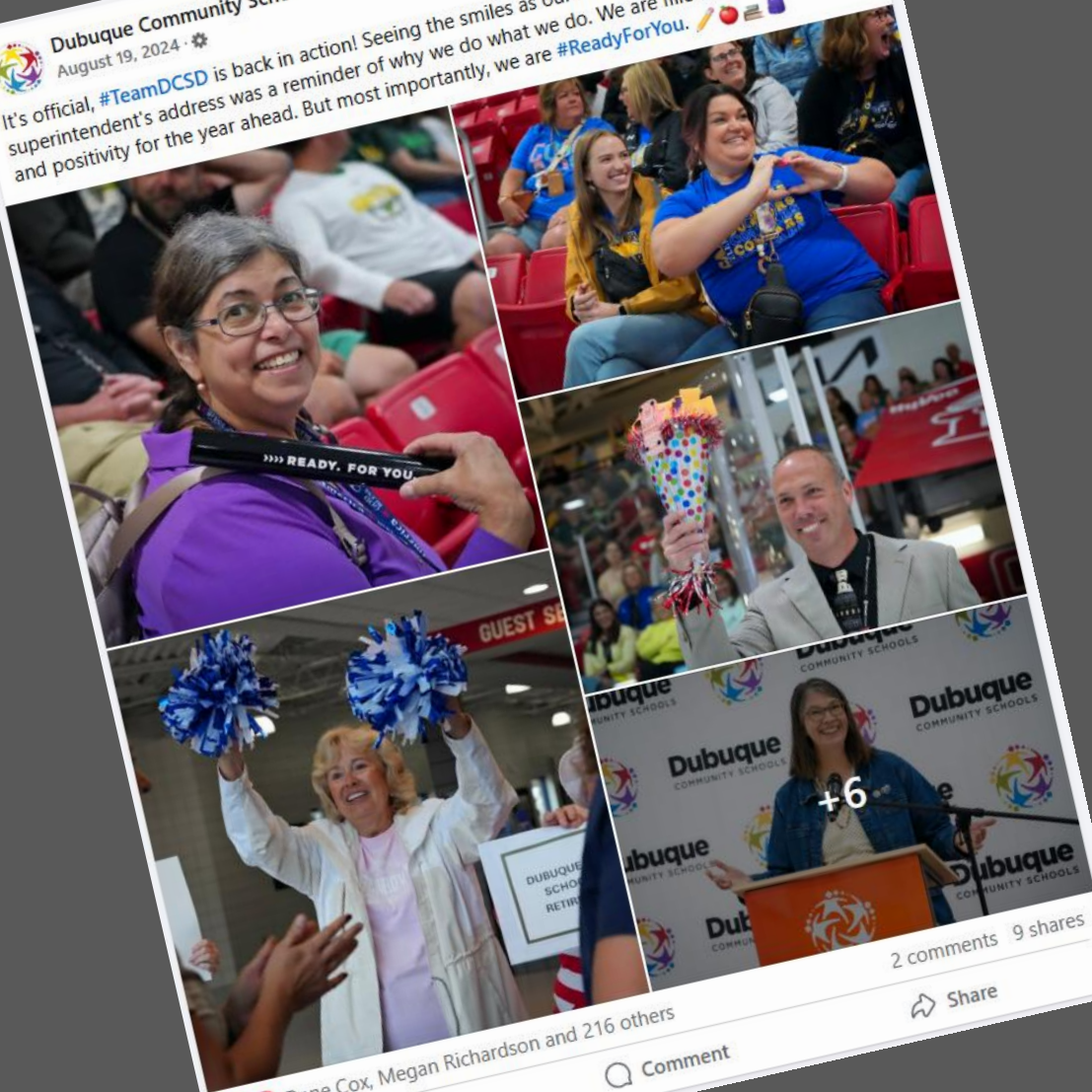
Sincerely,  
Amy





Dubuque Community School District  
August 19, 2024 · 🌟

It's official, **#TeamDCSD** is back in action! Seeing the smiles as our staff gathered to hear the superintendent's address was a reminder of why we do what we do. We are filled with excitement and positivity for the year ahead. But most importantly, we are **#ReadyForYou.** 🍌🍌🍌



👍 Dane Cox, Megan Richardson and 216 others



2 comments 9 shares



Dubuque Community School District  
September 24, 2024 · 🌟

We're more than a school district - we're a community committed to **#SuccessForAll**. No matter your background, abilities, or goals, we are **#ReadyForYou**. Learn more about how our new strategic plan is focused on helping every student thrive: <https://www.dbqschools.org/school-board/strategicplan/>



READY. FOR YOU.

Class of 2038

READY. FOR YOU.

Class of 2037



READY. FOR YOU.

Class of 2036



READY. FOR YOU.

Class of 2035



READY. FOR YOU.

Class of 2034

👍 Cathy Brimeyer, Megan Richardson and 93 others

10 shares

**Consistency can  
feel boring.**

**It's NOT!**

# Key Board Member Takeaways

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- **Share, share, share – you are a visible brand ambassador!**
- **Reflect the district's values in every message.**
- **Don't try to be like districts around you – embrace your uniqueness.**
- **Foster a welcoming environment for all.**
- **Use logos, colors, and fonts consistently.**

# Questions?

**Mike Cyze**, Chief Communication Officer  
Dubuque Community School District  
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**Jessica Hartgers**, Communication Specialist  
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